

OPPORTUNITY NOTICE – 04/28/05



FUNDING GUIDANCE

Local Water Quality Improvement Projects Targeting Nonpoint Source Reduction

- Project Type I: TMDL Implementation – Pollutant: Fecal Coliform
- Project Type II: Watershed Characterization and TMDL Implementation

Introduction

South Carolina's Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), Bureau of Water (BOW), Watersheds and Planning Section is soliciting proposals from local stakeholder groups or governmental entities as well as other agencies, institutions and organizations interested in applying for funding¹ for **Local Water Quality Improvement Projects**. These projects will support the restoration of impaired water bodies through implementation, or model development and implementation of an approved TMDL.

A TMDL or Total Maximum Daily Load is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards. TMDLs specify the pollutant reduction necessary for the waterbody to meet standards.

Project Type I: TMDL Implementation

Once a TMDL has been developed, it needs to be implemented. Implementation can include any activity that will prevent/reduce pollutant inputs and allow water quality standards to be met. See page 6 for resources on potential activities for these projects.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the complete reports describing the approved TMDLs located on the DHEC website (www.scdhec.gov/water). Hard copies may be requested from the Watershed Managers (contact info on page 7). Only those proposals that reflect a clear understanding of the target watershed(s) and associated TMDL recommendations will be considered.

List of TMDLs available for implementation funding

Implementation proposals may also be submitted for approved or completed TMDLs. Please click [here](#) to see the list.

In areas where a portion of the TMDL is within a MS4 designation, only the part of the watershed outside the MS4 is eligible for funding.

Project ideas or questions should be directed to one of the Watershed Managers listed on page 7. Watersheds and Planning Section staff are also available to meet for discussions on possible projects. Workshops can be arranged upon request.

Project Type II: Watershed Characterization and TMDL Implementation

Proposals will be accepted that include **watershed characterization** and **implementation** of a TMDL. Sites on the list of impaired waters for SC (303(d) list) are potentially eligible for this type of project. Before preparing a proposal, contact Kathy Stecker (803-898-4011) to see if the area qualifies for funding for TMDL study.

Applicants must demonstrate experience with selecting and using appropriate computer models. This should include, but not be limited to, selection of proper inputs, refining model and inputs, and defining critical conditions. The

¹ Under section 319 of the Clean Water Act, the US EPA awards a Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant to SC DHEC to fund eligible projects that support the implementation of the South Carolina NPS Management Program.

prospective grantee must be familiar with existing sources of water quality data and land use information and must have the ability to design a monitoring program to collect additional water quality data if deemed necessary. The prospective grantee must be available to participate in any stakeholder meetings held during or at the completion of the project.

Any model used must be nonproprietary and acceptable to DHEC and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as an appropriate tool (see resources on page 6). The grantee will provide DHEC Bureau of Water staff training in the use of model, if necessary. The model must be provided to DHEC Bureau of Water for its use upon completion of the watershed characterization. The final report will include all required TMDL components, except for final wasteload and load allocations and public participation.

General Proposal Guidelines

Activities NOT Eligible

Section 319 funds may not be used to implement requirements of draft or final NPDES permits, including Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Phase II stormwater permits. Funds may not be used to pay for requirements under a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan for a concentrated animal operation. Contact Doug Fabel (803-898-4222) for more information.

Food and Promotional Items

Prior approval must be obtained if food or certain promotional items will be purchased with 319 funds. Contact Doug Fabel (803-898-4222) for more information.

Funding

The maximum amount of federal 319 funds available per project is \$300,000. Proposals requesting funding for greater than \$300,000 will be considered, but only with **prior** justification and authorization. The State Revolving Fund (SRF) might be more suitable for funding very large projects. You may review the SRF information on the web (<http://www.scdhec.gov/water/html/srf.html>). SRF provides lower interest rate loans for nonpoint source (NPS) projects. Section 319 projects are typically funded by quarterly reimbursement. DHEC is not liable for any costs by the grantee prior to the date of grant agreement approval, and no payment in advance of the final approval can be made.

Non-Federal Match Requirement

All proposals must provide for a minimum **forty percent (40%) non-federal match**. Non-federal match funds may be cash or in-kind services and must be from non-federal sources (See resources on page 6). [Match activities](#) must meet the same eligibility requirements as the federally funded portion of the grant listed above. All of the match must be fully documented. Proposals must identify the agency/organization(s) providing non-federal match and amounts.

Total Project Cost = Federal Funds (60%) + Match Funds (40%)

Project Period

All projects should be for a period of up to three (3) years. Longer project periods are permissible with *prior approval and significant justification*.

Monitoring

DHEC will continue to monitor water quality; therefore additional monitoring may not be necessary. Clearly justify any anticipated monitoring to avoid duplication with DHEC's ongoing efforts.

Proposal Format

Applicants should submit a project proposal following the guidelines provided in this section. The proposal should be no more than ten (10) pages, excluding commitment letters from project partners.

- a. **Project title.**
- b. **Lead organization and project manager:** The lead organization will be responsible for managing the proposed project. Provide a brief narrative description of the lead organization qualifications for this project. Please include a *name of project manager, mailing address, telephone and FAX numbers*, and an *email address*. One person should serve as the primary contact with DHEC for the duration of the project.
- c. **Agency/organization financial officer or grant administrator:** Include name, mailing address, telephone and FAX numbers, and an email address.
- d. **Federal Identification Number.**
- e. **Cooperating organizations or partnerships:** All cooperators/partners should be thoroughly familiar with the project before being listed as a cooperator/partner. Cooperators/partners should have substantial involvement/role in project implementation. **Clearly** describe each cooperator's/partner's responsibilities with the project. The lead project agency should attach project commitment letters from all cooperating/partnering organizations.
- f. **Project location:** Include the name of the waterbody, the 11 or 14-digit hydrologic unit code, and the county or counties.
- g. **TMDL:** State whether the project is going to implement the TMDL for the entire watershed or just some portion of the watershed. If the project is just for a portion of the whole watershed, then a map (or GIS polygon) of the area must be included.
- h. **Project abstract:** The project abstract should be **no more than one page**. See sample abstract form below.

Agency:

Project Title:

Funding:

Federal: \$xx,xxx

Non-Federal: \$xx,xxx

Project Length (in months):

Project Location (waterbody, HUC, county):

Background/Overview of Project:

Objectives/Goals of the Project:

Methods Employed:

- i. **Project description (MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS):**
 - i. A brief description of the impairment to be addressed
 - ii. An identification of the sources of the target pollutants or groups of similar sources that will need to be controlled to achieve the load reductions established in the TMDL
 - iii. A description of the NPS management measures (see page 6 for examples) that will be implemented to achieve the load reductions established in the TMDL; an estimate of the load reductions expected for these management measures (recognizing the natural variability and the difficulty in precisely predicting the performance of management measures over time); and an identification of the critical areas in which those measures will be implemented to achieve the TMDL

- iv. Sources of technical and financial assistance needed, and/or authorities that will be relied upon, to implement the project
- v. A measurable information/education component that will be used to enhance public understanding of the project, and to encourage their participation in implementing NPS management measures (See resources on page6)
- vi. A schedule for implementing the NPS management measures that is reasonably expeditious
- vii. A description of interim, measurable milestones (events) that will occur throughout the implementation of the project and can be used to track project progress. Include start, completion, and reporting dates, and QA/QC plan approval if applicable. *Include quantifiable, specific outputs and deliverables, such as yearly load reductions, reports, manuals, videos, maps, meetings, BMP installation, etc.*
- viii. Specific criteria for evaluation: Describe the measures and practices of evaluation that will be used to measure success of the project. Quantify the expected improvements in terms of water quality. Examples can be provided upon request.
- j. **Project period:** Describe the length (in months) of the project, which should be no more than three years. Longer project periods are permissible with *prior approval and significant justification*.
- k. **Detailed itemized budget:** Budget categories include personnel, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, indirect costs, and other (see example below). Include details of non-Federal funding. Provide a brief narrative justification for each budget category. Projects will be evaluated for cost effectiveness during the selection process; therefore, please ensure that the budget is reasonable.

SAMPLE BUDGET FORMAT			
BUDGET CATEGORIES	FEDERAL FUNDS	NON-FEDERAL FUNDS*	TOTAL
Personnel (Salary) ¹			
Personnel (Fringe)			
Travel ²			
Equipment ³			
Supplies			
Contractual ⁴			
Other ⁵			
Indirect Charges ⁶			
TOTAL			

*List the source of all non-federal funds.

¹Itemize staffing costs including the number of hours, type of position, hourly rate excluding fringe or number of staff-years, type of position, and hourly rate excluding fringe.

²Show calculations for mileage

³Any one item \$1,000 or more

⁴Include all calculations

⁵e.g. Rental fees, bid advertisement

⁶Approved Federal rate

Additional Proposal Requirements for Type II Projects Only

- l. The proposal must include either the qualifications of the lead agency or the criteria the lead agency will use to select a contractor.
- m. Describe, in detail, models developed or used, preferably similar to those described in this request. Include any that resulted in EPA-approved TMDLs or comprehensive watershed plans.

- n. State experience with TMDLs (e.g. number of TMDLs developed).
- o. The proposal must also include the planned approach to the TMDL study.

Milestones (section i.) must include:

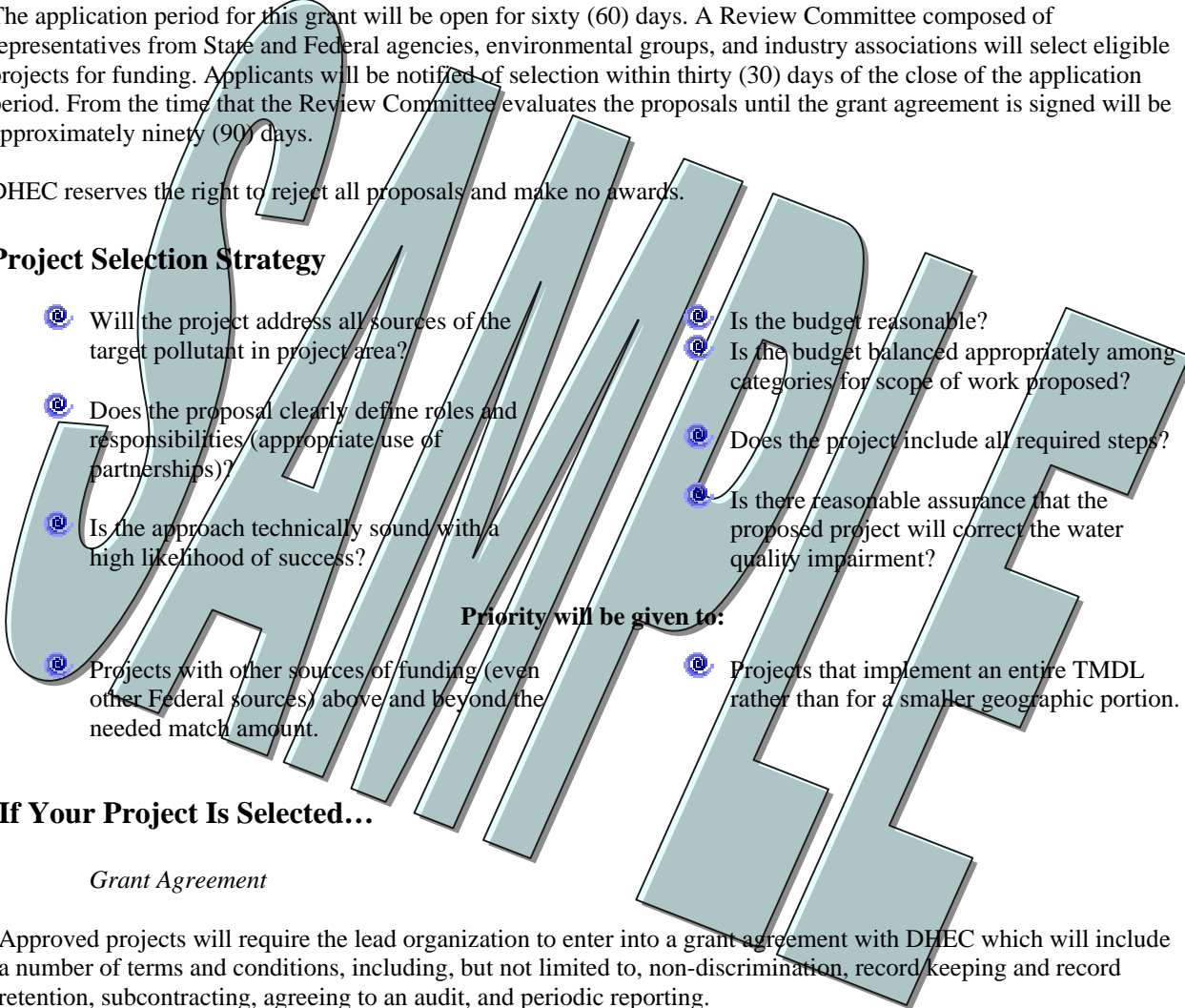
- Submission and approval of detailed description of TMDL development approach, method, and tools
- Submission of the model to DHEC for public notice and for EPA approval.

Application Review Process

The application period for this grant will be open for sixty (60) days. A Review Committee composed of representatives from State and Federal agencies, environmental groups, and industry associations will select eligible projects for funding. Applicants will be notified of selection within thirty (30) days of the close of the application period. From the time that the Review Committee evaluates the proposals until the grant agreement is signed will be approximately ninety (90) days.

DHEC reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards.

Project Selection Strategy

- 
- Will the project address all sources of the target pollutant in project area?
 - Does the proposal clearly define roles and responsibilities (appropriate use of partnerships)?
 - Is the approach technically sound with a high likelihood of success?
 - Is the budget reasonable?
 - Is the budget balanced appropriately among categories for scope of work proposed?
 - Does the project include all required steps?
 - Is there reasonable assurance that the proposed project will correct the water quality impairment?
- Priority will be given to:**
- Projects with other sources of funding (even other Federal sources) above and beyond the needed match amount.
 - Projects that implement an entire TMDL rather than for a smaller geographic portion.

If Your Project Is Selected...

Grant Agreement

Approved projects will require the lead organization to enter into a grant agreement with DHEC which will include a number of terms and conditions, including, but not limited to, non-discrimination, record keeping and record retention, subcontracting, agreeing to an audit, and periodic reporting.

Reports

The grantee agrees to submit additional project-specific information, interim status reports and a final report that evaluates the project. The evaluation is to include a critique of approaches that were used, and recommendations for other similar projects.

QA/QC Plan

All selected projects that include environmental monitoring, measurements, or data generation must have a DHEC approved quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) plan. For projects that involve collecting water quality data, the QA/QC documentation will include a project specific monitoring plan. A copy of the QA/QC guidelines is available upon request.

GIS Data

All selected projects that have a Geographic Information System (GIS) component must follow EPA/DHEC GIS guidance. A copy of the GIS guidelines is available upon request and DHEC's web site (<http://www.scdhec.gov/water/pubs/319g-gis.pdf>).


Animal Feeding Operations (AFO)

Proposals that include programs or activities projects that assist AFOs must include a provision to assure that any AFO that receives financial assistance pursuant to the grant has and will implement a comprehensive nutrient management plan as defined by BPA and DHEC.

Operation and Maintenance

Each Section 319 grant agreement will require that the project (i.e., BMPs) be properly operated and maintained in a manner consistent with Federal and state guidance.

Proposal Checklist

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- Include a cover letter indicating the lead organization's Federal Identification Number.
 - Double-check all calculations for accuracy.
 - Submit an original plus 8 copies.
 - Submit all 3-hole punched.
 - DO NOT** submit bound/stapled proposals.
 - Submit a diskette or CD using Microsoft Word format or e-mail to steckenk@dhc.sc.gov

Send or deliver proposals to (Faxes are not acceptable.):

SC DHEC - Bureau of Water
Division of Water Quality
2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201
Attention: Kathy Stecker

Project Resources

- *Best Management Practices* (BMPs), both structural and non-structural, should be the focus of the TMDL implementation process. A comprehensive technical document on methods to abate and control nonpoint pollution, **Guidance Specifying Management Measures for Sources of Nonpoint Pollution in Coastal Waters**, is located at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/MMGI/>. Refer to this website for some examples of BMPs for water quality improvement projects. This document is useful for guidance on BMP applications anywhere, not just in the coastal zone. Other useful sites include <http://www.scdhec.gov/water/pubs/impleappendix.pdf> and <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/measurablegoals/part3.cfm>.

Some South Carolina specific examples can be found in SC Home-A-Syst, Farming for Clean Water in SC, SC's BMPs for Forestry, Backyard Buffers, Turning the Tide, etc., which can be obtained from a watershed manager.

- Information on *education and outreach* activities and measurement tools can be found on the Getting in Step website (<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/outreach/documents/getnstep.pdf>).
- Check out these sites for more information regarding *match activities* and valuation of volunteer time: <http://www.scdhec.gov/water/pubs/319match.pdf> and http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html

- EPA utilizes and develops modeling tools for the development of *Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)*. These tools vary from simple spreadsheets to dynamic models. It is EPA's goal to make these tools and training on these tools available to states and other interested parties. The Watershed and Water Quality Modeling Technical Support Center maintains and distributes models and tools used for the development of TMDLs. To access the latest version of the TMDL Toolbox, visit the Center's webpage at www.epa.gov/athens/wwqts.

Contact Information

For info regarding the SC statewide NPS program:

Doug Fabel
803-898-4222
fabeldj@dhec.sc.gov

For information on grant reporting & procedures:

Deborah Clemons
803-898-4245
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For information on specific TMDLs:

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Saluda and Santee Watershed
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Deadline

**Project proposals must be
received by 5:00 P.M. Eastern
Time on June 28, 2005.**